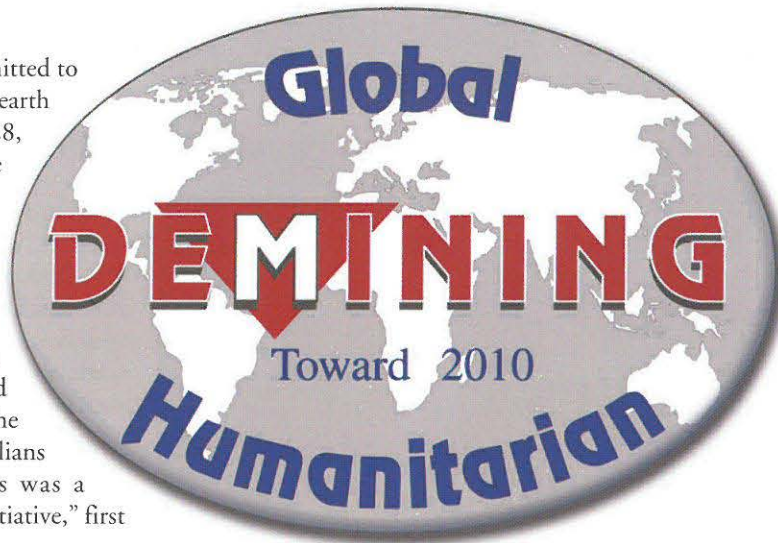


U.S. Office of Global Humanitarian Demining Works Toward Demining 2010 Goals

Since 1994, the United States has committed approximately \$400 million to worldwide humanitarian demining efforts. With its sights set on 2010, the U.S. Office of Global Humanitarian Demining is working to establish partnerships in the private sector.

By Elizabeth Cramer, MAIC

The United States has long been committed to the universally shared vision to rid the earth of the threat of landmines. On Nov. 28, 2000, U.S. Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State for Global Humanitarian Demining Donald K. Steinberg addressed the U.N. General Assembly, outlining U.S. Global Humanitarian Demining (GHD) plans for 2001. The plans include nearly \$100 million (U.S.) in funding for the upcoming year, and continued work with over 36 nations toward the goal of making the world "mine safe" for civilians by the end of this decade. The address was a continuation of the U.S. "Demining 2010 Initiative," first announced in 1997.



Demining 2010 Initiative

On Oct. 31, 1997, former Secretary of State Madeline Albright and former Secretary of Defense William Cohen jointly announced President Clinton's "Demining 2010 Initiative," with the goal of creating a mine safe world by the year 2010. The initiative was created in response to the severe threat to civilians posed by landmines. In 1997, it was estimated that 100 million landmines in over 64 countries cause about 26,000 casualties per year. The goal of the 2010 Initiative is to accelerate demining efforts, increase international coordination, and increase public and private resources dedicated to demining.

The initiative included several elements. The first element of the initiative was the appointment of a Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State for GHD and the creation of the Office of the Special Representative to oversee the 2010 Initiative. One element was a conference held in Washington D.C. in May 1998, to develop specific goals and strategies for achieving the initiative. The most obvious element was the continuation

of U.S. funding, with the United States committing \$80 million for 1998, a two-fold increase from its \$40 million in contributions in 1997. The final element was to encourage and support public-private partnerships to augment government and international organization activity.

Creation of GHD

The Office of the Special Representative for GHD and the new position of special representative of the president and secretary of state for GHD were established in October 1997, with the announcement of the Demining 2010 Initiative. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl F. Inderfurth was assigned as the first special representative.

The position of special representative was designed to provide the international demining community with a coordinator to bring together donors, deminers, landmine accident survivors and mine victims with governments, international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector

to improve the effectiveness of the global humanitarian demining effort.

The Special Representative's primary responsibility is to coordinate and lead the 2010 Initiative. This is achieved by working with other nations and organizations to coordinate and accelerate international demining efforts.

The Special Representative also works to increase the public and private resources dedicated to identifying and clearing mines, promote public awareness about mines, and improve the means of detecting and removing mines.



■ The current special representative, Ambassador Steinberg.

GHD Mission Statement

The Office of the Special Representative for GHD seeks to create conditions that will eliminate the threat of landmines to civilians around the world by the year 2010. The office supports efforts in the U.S. and abroad to accelerate landmine detection and clearance programs, promote landmine awareness in affected nations, assist survivors of landmine accidents, enhance research and development of new demining technologies, and develop public-private partnerships to support these programs (From the Office of the Special Representative of the President and Secretary of State for Global Humanitarian Demining).

GHD Objectives

The objectives of GHD are achieved through the combined efforts of U.S. government agencies, foreign governments, nongovernmental agencies, private corporations, international agencies and the United Nations. The ultimate goals are to empower mine-affected countries to assume their own leadership over mine action programs and to speed the pace of demining.

The goals of GHD depend upon partnerships with the private sector and the availability of adequate resources from appropriated U.S. funds. While, contributions have already been made to mine action by corporations, NGOs, philanthropic foundations, civic foundations, educational institutions and other private groups, public-private partnerships are needed both presently and for the future to speed the demining efforts.

Ambassador Steinberg's Recent Address

On Nov. 28, 2000, the current special representative, Ambassador Steinberg, addressed the U.N. General Assembly with an update on the progress in the fight against landmines. Ambassador Steinberg reassured the audience that the United States is pleased to support the effort to reduce the danger of over 70,000 landmines that threaten individuals and the peace, democracy, and national reconciliation of one-third of the world's nations. He outlined GHD's progress since 1997. Since then, the United States has destroyed 3.3 million landmines. In 1997, the country unilaterally banned the export and transfer of APLs, and by 2003 it will end the use of all APLs outside Korea. Ambassador Steinberg also stated that the United States is seeking alternatives to landmines. The United States has committed to joining the Ottawa Treaty by 2006 if effective alternatives can be found and deployed by that time.

He stated that the United States is currently working with more than 36 nations in mine clearance, mine awareness education and mine clearance training. Although the programs take place worldwide, the largest programs are in Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, Central America, Laos, Mozambique, and Rwanda. The United States is using the best scientific talent available to identify new demining and clearance techniques. GHD continues to advise and support mine action centers such as the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and James Madison University's Mine Action Information Center.

In his speech, Ambassador Steinberg also outlined some of the exciting efforts of GHD to help establish public-private partnerships to support the Demining 2010 Initiative. The United Nations Association of the USA's

(UNA-USA) Adopt-A-Minefield program generates private contributions to demine the 100 worst mine fields in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Cambodia, Croatia and Mozambique, in coordination with Ted Turner's U.N. Foundation. The U.N. Foundation is also supporting the Survey Action Center to produce mine surveys of a dozen countries. DC Comics created more than 1 million mine awareness comic books for children in Bosnia, Central America and Kosovo. An especially exciting operation is the joint effort of the Marshall Legacy Institute and the Humpty Dumpty Institute to purchase, train, and deploy mine detecting dogs worldwide, including a dog team recently sent to Lebanon. Wheelchairs for the World is helping disabled people regain mobility throughout the world.

GHD Efforts in 2000

Besides spearheading efforts to promote private-public partnerships, Ambassador Steinberg worked to raise domestic awareness of the landmine issue. In December 2000, he addressed over 600 high school students from 27 schools at the 17th Prince William Model United Nations Conference at C.D. Hylton Senior High School in Woodbridge, Va. In his speech titled "Humanitarian Demining: To Walk the Earth in Safety," Steinberg described U.S. and U.N. mine clearance efforts. The conference was designed for students to model actual foreign delegations to the United Nations in attempt to address world issues through diplomacy, debate, negotiation and parliamentary procedure.

An ongoing partnership arranged by the special representative between the U.S. Department of State and Roots of Peace, a California-based NGO, has evolved into a new mine awareness campaign. Passengers of public transportation in the San Francisco Bay Area are now seeing bright orange advertisements with the message "What if landmines were in the USA?" The signs are designed to provoke commuters to imagine the effects of landmines and provide information about how they can participate in making the Balkans mine-safe through Roots of Peace and the Slovenian International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victim Assistance.

The District of Columbia Students Against Landmines (DC SALaM) Project was created in January 2000 as part of Ted Turner's U.N. Foundation outreach program to the District. This project incorporates the UNA-USA Adopt-A-Minefield Program. On Nov. 16, 2000, Ambassador Steinberg was the keynote speaker at Bell Multicultural High School to help launch DC SALaM's campaign to raise funds to clear a mine field in Mozambique. The

ambassador shared his experiences in Angola and Kosovo, where he saw firsthand the effects of landmines on civilians. Two Texas chapters of the UNA-USA also launched drives to clear select mine fields in Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of UNA-USA's Adopt-A-Minefield program. On Sept. 21, 2000, Ambassador Steinberg was a keynote speaker at the GHD conference held by the Austin Chapter of UNA-USA to promote public awareness for humanitarian demining, particularly to "adopt" a mine field in the village of Praca, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Ambassador then proceeded to help the Houston Chapter launch its Adopt-A-Minefield drive to clear another mined area in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He also spoke at four schools while in Texas. The ambassador and GHD continue to plan events to promote public awareness of the landmine problem.

GHD Plans for 2001

Since former President Clinton's 1994 call to the United Nations to eliminate the threat of landmines, the U.S. government has donated about \$400 million to humanitarian mine action efforts worldwide. In his address to the U.N. General Assembly, Steinberg announced that the United States is committed to continue support through the provision of approximately \$100 million in 2001.

As 2001 gets underway, GHD is working with Warner Brothers on a pilot project for public service announcements using animated Looney Tunes characters combined with real footage from mine affected countries. The purpose is to foster greater mine awareness among threatened populations, particularly children, and to demonstrate that mine victims continue to be valued citizens.

Following up on Ambassador Steinberg's public outreach in Texas last summer, GHD is now working with a consortium of leading citizens from Austin to galvanize that city's practical support for mine action overseas. Through these and other efforts the GHD strives to build public-private partnerships to support the Demining 2010 Initiative and to create a mine-safe world for all. ■

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